

5th General Congregation: Overview presented by Vatican News



#SinodoAmazonico

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Proposals for lay female ministry

The work of the work of the Special Assembly for the Pan-Amazon Synod of Bishops continues in the Vatican. In total, 174 Synod Fathers were present in the Synod Hall for the 5th General Congregation.

Vatican News – Città del Vaticano

The integral health of the Amazon is one of the concerns expressed this morning in the Synod Hall by the Synod Fathers. The capitalist model of development that devours the environment, the fires which are destroying the region, corruption, deforestation, and illegal cultivation all danger the health of both the peoples of this territory and of the entire planet.

Protection of peoples in voluntary isolation

Attention was focused upon the indigenous peoples who live in voluntary isolation, particularly the vulnerable and those exposed to genocide. To maintain keen awareness of this theme one senses the need to institute an international ecclesial look-out for the protection of human rights and the needs of these communities.

More dialogue: That the Church may reach local populations

To highlight that at times the Catholic Church in parts has been slow to reach out to the needs of this population. Sometimes in fact she is distant from the local peoples and as a result this void is filled by the propositions of neo-Pentecostal churches.

It is urgent and non-negotiable for the Church to continue the ecumenical and interreligious dialogue. Respect and fruitfulness, these dimensions are fundamental for a Church that is out-going in the Pan-Amazon region, characterised by a multicultural context. Inter-culturality is more than a challenge. No, to an imposition from on high onto their own proper culture. Yes, to a welcome of the other and a healthy decentralisation according to synodality. The Church, without hiding the difficulties, as missionary, must have an indigenous face favouring the logic whereby the peripheries move to the centre and the peripheries in a rich movement of mutual transformation.

That ministers may respond to the peoples of the Amazon

With a synodal eye, it is also suggested the appeal for a greater involvement of laity in the creation of new ministries that correspond to the needs of the Amazonian peoples. Might the Church therefore, in a creative way propose multiform ministries between the indigenous peoples and the peoples of

the forest. Since the Second Vatican Council there have been great calls in favour of inculturation in the liturgy, with respectful celebrations be they traditions and languages of the local people, so it is the integral message of the Gospel. A careful discernment on the part of the bishops is needed so that no solution *a priori* is excluded, not even that of ordaining married men. It in fact resounds then, the request of many seminarians for an affective formation targeted at curing the wounds caused by the sexual revolution. Today many desire to rediscover an awareness of the value of celibacy and chastity. The Church must not be silent about this, but instead offers her treasure, the doctrine that transforms hearts.

A lay female ministry

At the same time stands the counter-fact of the spread of violence against women. Departing from this, is the idea of instituting a lay female ministry for evangelisation. It is necessary therefore to have more active participation of women in the life of the Church with a 'Samaritan eye.'

Unity in diversity

It must be pursued the idea of unity in diversity according to the image of the polyhedron suggested multiple times by the Pope. If one is asked to go to the school of Jesus, from a notion of a pastoral visit to a pastoral presence and listening, thus proclaiming a divine gentleness, promoting the heart of a Common Home, not only between friends, but also between those who are far away and think in different ways. Values rooted in Jesus of a universal fraternity, of an integral ecology and of style of life inspired by the 'good life' as a response to the many egotistical proposals of our time.

In the face of the tragedy of climate change denounced at the global level, this Synod is a moment of grace and a great opportunity for the Church to promote an ecological conversion and an integrated education.

Migration and the urban pastoral ministry

The attention of the Synod Fathers posed also the question of migration on of the principal cause of socio-politics, climates, economies, and ethnic persecution. These problems require a specific pastoral approach. The imposition of a western 'extractivist' model strikes at families and forces youth to move to the cities. The Church must make herself a promoter of an urban pastoral ministry.

Indigenous theology and local traditions

In the debates, the value of indigenous theology is recognised, with reference to the call of the Pope to shape a Church with an indigenous face, in a way that re-reads the essential elements of the Catholic universe with an indigenous hermeneutic. The value of traditional medicine as a valid alternative to western medicine is underlined. It is proposed also the creation of major natural reserves to guard the biodiversity and the plurality of Amazonian cultures.

From the General Congregation this morning, opened with the praying of the Liturgy of the Hours, along with a special prayer for the difficult situation in Ecuador.

Source: Vatican News